

The District 3 Slate

June 1999

County Supervisor Pam Slater

"If we want to keep businesses and jobs in San Diego, we must prize them as much as they prize their customers."
-- Supervisor Pam Slater



County Supervisor
Pam Slater

Dear Friend:

Each year, the San Diego Taxpayers Association hands out its Golden Watchdog and Golden Fleece awards. As you can see in the photo, this year San Diego County won two Golden Watchdog awards.

The watchdog awards recognize the most efficient use of tax dollars by an agency or organization.

The County won a "Regional Watchdog" award for the elimination of its business license tax, which will save taxpayers more than \$1 million.

We also won an "Innovation Watchdog" award for our use of re-engineering and competition to provide services better, faster, cheaper. Those efforts have saved an estimated \$20 million.

These awards recognize the work put in by County Supervisors and county employees to provide the best service at the lowest possible cost. You deserve nothing less.

Pam Slater

County earns two 'Watchdog' awards from San Diego Taxpayers Association

Awards show "It's not business as usual", Slater says in interview

The County of San Diego's attitude toward business used to be anything but friendly.

The County did little on its own to attract or keep businesses. Departments processed permits when it fit their own schedules. Companies didn't know who to contact.

That all changed when Supervisor Pam Slater took office. In a recent interview, Slater described steps she and her fellow board members took that resulted in the County winning two "Golden Watchdog" awards from the San Diego Taxpayers Association.

Q: You've said the business attitude is 180 degrees different. What has changed?

A: It's not business as usual, that's for sure. Soon after I took office, I introduced a plan to create an Office of Trade and Business Development, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors. We created that office in 1995, and it has a business ombudsperson to facilitate the fast handling of permits, cut red tape and create

a business-friendly county.

Q: Have you seen any results from the changes you started?

A: Actually, we saw results rather quickly. SGS Thomson, a computer chip manufacturer in Rancho Bernardo, decided to stay in San Diego County because of an incentive

package the County helped put together. It kept and created more than 400 jobs here.

Q: What guidelines govern how the County offers these economic incentive packages?

A: That's a good question, because even though we want

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Charge it: Supervisor Slater unveils the new electric recharging station.

An electric difference

It's the place to go when you want to get 'amped.'

Acting on an idea first proposed by Supervisor Pam Slater, the County of San Diego and San Diego Gas & Electric have created a solar-powered, electrical generating station.

The station, located at the County Administration Center on Pacific Highway, features six bays that produce electric power for recharging electric vehicles.

"This partnership shows how government and business

See **Electric** on back page ...

The staff of Supervisor Pam Slater

John Weil, Chief of Staff

Trish Boaz (Land Use); Robert Duckett (Criminal Justice);

Jim Gonsalves (Housing); Blair Hoppe (Health and Social Services);

Ron Kelley (Budget & Finances); Anne-Marie Jewel (Scheduling)

Frances Porter (Receptionist)

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Let's review the contract, shall we?

Anytime you're spending more than \$200 million, you want to ensure it's being spent wisely.

That's the goal of the county's Contract Review Committee created by Supervisor Pam Slater.

The committee's aim is to closely review all contracts for services and evaluate the policies and procedures that govern the county's contracts, with the express purpose of protecting the county's financial interests.

"The County contracts for millions each year on services," Slater said. "With that kind of money at stake, we must have more safeguards on how that money is spent."

The five-member committee reviews all county contracts, the performance of those contracts and the county's procedures for guiding contracts.

The committee only examines service contracts, not any construction contracts.

"This is an important partnership between the County, businesses and community leaders," Slater said.

Business: Slater recaps accomplishments

companies to move and stay in San Diego, we have to ensure we don't 'give away the store' to keep them here. That's why the Board of Supervisors approved my County Incentive Policy, which directs how we work with companies.

Q: How did the County wind up winning the two "Golden Watchdog" awards?

A: First of all, we're grateful for the honor from the San Diego Taxpayers Association. The County received a total of 13 nominations, which shows how hard we've worked to change our direction. The hard work has paid off.

We won the "Regional Watchdog" award because the Board of Supervisors last year decided to eliminate a tax on businesses. Previously, a company or owner had to pay a fee just to get a license to do business in the county's unincorporated area. It's tough enough to get a new business up and running without paying a fee, just to get a license. We wanted to encourage new business owners to open up shop in the County, so we decided to cut the fee.

Q: The second honor was for the "Innovation Watchdog" award. What did this award



Honors: *The Watchdog awards*

recognize?

A: We won this award for applying the principles of the private sector to public government. In February 1998, the Board of Supervisors adopted the use of Re-Engineering and Managed Competition. In the private sector, these principles keep companies productive. We used them to provide services

better, faster and cheaper. Through re-engineering and managed competition, we reduced overhead and administrative costs. In total, we saved about \$20 million.

If we want to keep businesses and jobs in San Diego, we must prize them as much as they prize their customers. These awards show that we do.

Electric:

can work together to promote renewable energy sources and alternative fuels," Slater said. "This effort puts the County and SDG&E at the forefront of innovation."

The recharging station was one of several ideas developed out of a direction first outlined by Slater. In 1997, Slater urged the County to work with companies to accelerate demand for alternative-fuel vehicles in an effort called the County ShAIRholder program.

*Would you like to receive
The District 3 Slate by e-
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